



Name of Project: Empowering Underserved Alzheimer's Families through Training, Support, and Respite: Colorado's Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Grant Program

Name of Organization: State of Colorado/Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System, Fort Collins, CO

Principles of Choices for Independence: Empowerment/Access to Information and Services, Evidence-Based Prevention and Wellness

Description

Through a three-year grant funded by the Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Grants (ADDGS) to States program at the U.S. Administration on Aging, the Colorado State University (CSU)-Tri Ethnic Center for Prevention Research and the Alzheimer's Association Colorado Chapter (AACC) are developing services to support family caregivers of individuals with dementia through three key avenues:

- (1) providing an evidence-based caregiver training program, Savvy Caregiver,
- (2) implementing consumer-directed care, and
- (3) collaborating with their state Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC).

Specific populations targeted through this grant include family caregivers of rural, Hispanic, African American, and developmentally disabled adults with dementia.

An overarching goal of Colorado's program is to expand services to underserved populations. Objectives to achieve this goal include: implementing caregiver trainings, providing follow-up supportive services, starting new adult day care programs, promoting respite care through the grants to individual families, exploring service delivery across state lines, and using a Coordination Task Force to recommend policies for streamlining service delivery.

Key partners involved in these efforts are the Alzheimer's Association Colorado Chapter, Colorado Aging and Disability Resource Center, Colorado State University Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, Colorado Department of Human Services, Aging and Adult Services Division, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing and the Colorado Area Agencies on Aging.

Evidence-Based Practice

Colorado is implementing the Savvy Caregiver programming, originally developed, tested, and evaluated at the University of Minnesota. Savvy Caregiver training is currently being conducted in seven rural Colorado towns per year.

Colorado worked with one of the key developers of the Savvy Caregiver program to make it more suitable for their rural population. For example, since many rural caregivers live in extremely remote areas and are not able to commit to the original number of required sessions, Colorado's Project Director worked with the Savvy Caregiver program developer to condense the number of sessions, making it more suitable for caregivers in rural areas.

Evaluations are completed with all Savvy Caregiver trainings. These evaluations have documented reduced depression, increased use of support groups, and increases in the variety of respite services used by caregivers.

Colorado's program is contributing to the evidence-base of the Savvy Caregiver program. In fact, two articles on Colorado's implementation of the Savvy Caregiver program and its effectiveness have been published in peer-reviewed journals.

Consumer-Directed Care:

Colorado offers consumer-directed respite grants of up to \$1,000 per year to each participating family for the purchase of respite services. The funds may be spent at the discretion of the family for in-home services, adult day care, or short stays in a nursing home. Eligibility is non-means tested. Over one hundred consumer-directed respite care grants have been provided to families

Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC):

The Colorado Project Director and a project partner from AACC have been appointed to the Advisory Council of the Aging and Disability Resource Center. The AACC project partner was appointed Vice Chair of the Advisory Council. Collaborating with the ADRC will ensure that dementia-capable systems are put in place at the outset of the ADRCs development.

Conclusion:

The Colorado project is expanding services to underserved populations, improving well being and use of services by participating families, streamlining state service delivery systems, and disseminating results through journal articles and systems change reports.

As a result of the strong emphasis on data collection and analysis, Colorado is working to quantify the impact of their programs. This will lead to lessons learned and information that will allow others to replicate their findings.

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